

**ENDANGERING THE WELFARE OF A VULNERABLE  
ELDERLY PERSON FIRST DEGREE  
(D Felony)  
(Serious Physical Injury; Reckless)  
Penal Law 260.34(2)  
(Committed on or after Nov. 1, 1998)**

The \_\_\_\_ count is Endangering the Welfare of a Vulnerable Elderly Person in the First Degree.

Under our law, a person is guilty of Endangering the Welfare of a Vulnerable Elderly Person in the First Degree when, being a caregiver for a vulnerable elderly person he or she recklessly causes serious physical injury to such person.

Some of the terms used in this definition have their own special meaning in our law. I will now give you the meaning of the following terms: "vulnerable elderly person," "caregiver," "serious physical injury," and "recklessly."

**VULNERABLE ELDERLY PERSON** means a person sixty years of age or older who is suffering from a disease or infirmity associated with advanced age and manifested by demonstrable physical, mental or emotional dysfunction to the extent that the person is incapable of adequately providing for his or her own health or personal care.<sup>1</sup>

**CAREGIVER** means a person who assumes responsibility for the care of a vulnerable elderly person pursuant to a court order or receives monetary or other valuable consideration for providing care for a vulnerable elderly person.<sup>2</sup>

**SERIOUS PHYSICAL INJURY** means impairment of a person's physical condition which creates a substantial risk of

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<sup>1</sup> Penal Law § 260.30(3).

<sup>2</sup> Penal Law § 260.30(1).

death, or which causes death or serious and protracted disfigurement, protracted impairment of health or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily organ.<sup>3</sup>

A person acts RECKLESSLY with respect to serious physical injury to a vulnerable elderly person when that person:

engages in conduct which creates or contributes to a substantial and unjustifiable risk that serious physical injury to a vulnerable elderly person will occur,

and when he or she is aware of and consciously disregards that risk,

and when that risk is of such nature and degree that disregard of it constitutes a gross deviation from the standard of conduct that a reasonable person would observe in the situation.<sup>4</sup>

*[NOTE: Where there is evidence of voluntary intoxication on the part of the defendant, add:*

A person also acts recklessly when he or she creates such a risk but is unaware of that risk solely by reason of voluntary intoxication.<sup>5]</sup>

In order for you to find the defendant guilty of this crime, the People are required to prove, from all of the evidence in the case, beyond a reasonable doubt, each of the following four elements:

1. That on or about (date), the defendant (defendant's name) was a caregiver for (specify);

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<sup>3</sup> Penal Law §10.00(10).

<sup>4</sup>See Penal Law §15.05(3); *People v Boutin*, 75 N.Y.2d 692 (1996).

<sup>5</sup>See Penal Law §15.05(3).

2. That, on that date, (specify) was a vulnerable elderly person;
3. That, on that date, in the county of (county), the defendant caused serious physical injury to that vulnerable elderly person; and
4. That the defendant did so recklessly.

Therefore, if you find that the People have proven beyond a reasonable doubt each of those elements, you must find the defendant guilty of the crime of Endangering the Welfare of a Vulnerable Elderly Person in the First Degree as charged in the \_\_\_\_\_ count.

On the other hand, if you find that the People have not proven beyond a reasonable doubt any one or more of those elements, you must find the defendant not guilty of the crime of Endangering the Welfare of a Vulnerable Elderly Person in the First Degree as charged in the \_\_\_\_\_ count.